

ZIKA FACT SHEET:

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



■ WHAT IS ZIKA VIRUS?

Zika is a virus (germ) that is spread to people by *Aedes* mosquitoes, the same mosquitoes that can also spread dengue and chikungunya. The virus was first discovered in 1947 and has been found in tropical Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands. Zika virus was first found in Latin America and the Caribbean in May 2015. In 2016, Zika was found for the first time in the United States in someone who travelled to Central America.

Areas with Active Zika Transmission (2015-2016)



Source: Voice of America

■ HOW DO PEOPLE GET ZIKA VIRUS?

Zika virus is mainly spread through the bite of infected *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes (also known as yellow fever mosquitoes) and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes (also known as Asian tiger mosquitoes). These mosquitoes are aggressive daytime biters that like to lay eggs in small, water-holding containers and live in and around households.

Zika virus can also be passed from a mother to her baby during pregnancy or around the time of birth. **If you are pregnant and develop symptoms within 2 weeks after travelling to a country where Zika is occurring, it is important to tell your doctor where and when you travelled.** Currently, there is no evidence of infants getting the Zika virus through breastfeeding. Zika virus may also be spread through sex or a blood transfusion.

■ IS THERE A VACCINE TO PREVENT ZIKA VIRUS?

Currently, there is no vaccine to prevent Zika virus infection.

■ WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF ZIKA VIRUS?

About 1 in 5 people with Zika virus will get sick. For people who get sick, the illness is usually mild. Most people who are infected with Zika virus have no symptoms.

If symptoms do develop, the most common are:

- Fever
- Rash
- Joint pain
- Conjunctivitis (red eyes)

Symptoms usually begin 2 to 7 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito and can last for several days to a week. Severe symptoms requiring hospitalization are uncommon and deaths are rare.

If you are sick with a fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes after returning from an area where Zika virus occurs, then contact your healthcare provider and avoid mosquito bites to help prevent the possible spread of the virus to others.

■ HOW IS ZIKA VIRUS DIAGNOSED?

If you develop symptoms of fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes, then see your doctor. Your doctor may order blood tests to look for Zika virus or similar viruses, like dengue or chikungunya. If you have recently travelled, then tell your doctor.



CONTROLLING THE BREEDING SITES OF *Aedes* MOSQUITOES CAN REDUCE THE SPREAD OF ZIKA VIRUS.

IF YOU ARE SICK WITH ZIKA, THEN PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS FROM MOSQUITO BITES DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF ILLNESS.

■ IS THERE TREATMENT FOR ZIKA?

There is no specific treatment for Zika virus. Your doctor may give you medicines, like acetaminophen, to help reduce symptoms, such as fever and pain. They may also recommend getting plenty of rest, drinking fluids to prevent dehydration, and avoiding aspirin or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).

■ WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE ZIKA?

During the first week of infection, it is important to take steps to protect yourself from being bitten by mosquitoes. If a female *Aedes* mosquito bites you within your first week of infection, the mosquito can become infected with Zika virus and then pass the virus to others. If you are sick with Zika, then avoid mosquito bites to help prevent the possible spread of the virus.

If you are pregnant, tell your doctor where and when you travelled. If you are a man who has travelled to an area where Zika virus is ongoing, and you have a pregnant partner, then it is recommended that you abstain from sexual activity or consistently and correctly use condoms during sexual activity for the duration of the pregnancy.

■ WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT ZIKA AND PREGNANCY?

If a pregnant woman becomes infected with Zika virus, her baby may be born with a smaller than normal head (microcephaly). Studies are being conducted to understand the possible relationship between Zika virus infection and microcephaly in newborns.

Until more is known, the CDC recommends that women who are pregnant, or who may become pregnant, postpone travel to any area where the spread of Zika virus is ongoing. If you must travel to a high risk area, then talk to your healthcare provider first and take steps to prevent mosquito bites during your trip.

■ WHAT COUNTRIES HAVE ZIKA VIRUS?

Specific areas where Zika virus is ongoing are difficult to determine and are likely to change over time. For updates, visit the CDC Zika Travel Information page at: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information>.

■ IS ZIKA VIRUS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA?

So far in the Southern California region, Zika virus infections have only been found in a few people who were infected while travelling outside of the U.S. Zika virus has not been found in any mosquitoes in Southern California.

■ ARE *Aedes* MOSQUITOES IN LONG BEACH?

No. *Aedes* mosquitoes have not been detected in Long Beach, although they have been found in neighboring cities. The City of Long Beach regularly monitors for *Aedes* mosquitoes and tests for mosquito-borne diseases.

■ HOW CAN I PROTECT AGAINST ZIKA VIRUS?

In areas where Zika virus is present, everyone should protect themselves from mosquito bites. Using insect repellent is safe and effective. **Pregnant women and women who are breastfeeding can and should use an EPA-registered insect repellent as directed by the product label.**

To prevent mosquito bites, you can also wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, remove standing water in areas in and around your home, clean birdbaths and pet-watering dishes weekly, and repair holes in window/door screens.

Please contact the **City of Long Beach Environmental Health Vector Control Program** at (562) 570-4132 if you notice an unusual number of mosquitoes or if you are being bitten during the day.

■ WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT ZIKA?

City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services
<http://longbeach.gov/health/news/what-you-should-know-about-zika/>

California Department of Public Health:
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HEALTHINFO/DISCOND/Pages/Zika.aspx>

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>

